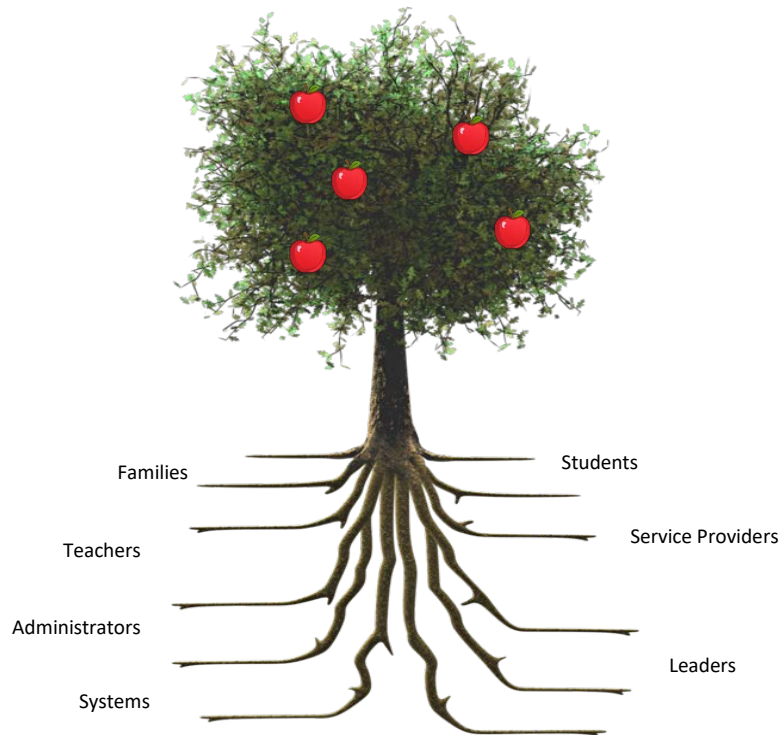


Special Education Directors Handbook

July 2018



This handbook is designed to assist the special education director in performing the essential elements of this leadership position. The guideline is formatted according to the eight Colorado professional standards.



COLORADO
Department of Education

Forms contained within this document were developed by the Colorado Department of Education and the Exceptional Student Services Unit's Mentor Project Team.

Introduction:

The State of Colorado is divided into 8 regions, each representing Administrative Units (AU) located within that region across the State. Special Education Directors meet periodically to discuss issues in their regions and the State. State Directors Leadership Team (SDLT) representatives serve as regional liaisons to the Colorado Department of Education. For more information on regions go to the link for:

[Colorado's educational regions displayed on a map](#)





Special Education Director Standard One: Foundations of Leadership

The Special Education Director will have a solid foundation for leadership by: (a) demonstrating a comprehensive knowledge of special education organization, programs, laws and best practices; and (b) setting high standards and a positive direction for special education consistent with the values, mission and vision of the state and administrative unit. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

1.1 Promote and reinforce the belief that a free and appropriate education is the fundamental right of all students.

1.2 Recognize and accept personal and professional accountability to direct, monitor and continually work to improve the educational processes and practices for which he/she is responsible.

1.3 Articulate and model a clear set of core professional values.

1.4 Demonstrate ethical behavior by acting with integrity of word and action.

1.5 Articulate comprehensive knowledge of the significant elements of special education; its history, organization, programs, laws and best practices.

1.6 Build mutually respectful relationships through effective listening and empathetic responses.

1.7 Participate in ongoing quality professional development.

1.8 Collaborate with others to ensure there is continued awareness of the latest research regarding special education, learning theory and best instructional practices.



ESSU Responsibility List

Yearly the CDE posts a list which has contact information and names of CDE staff assigned to specific areas.

Link to: [CDE Exceptional Student Services Unit's consultant responsibility list](#)

Exceptional Student Services Unit (ESSU) Year at a Glance Document

Link to: [Exceptional Student Services Unit Year at a Glance Document](#)

Annually the ESSU publishes a Year at a Glance calendar to inform Special Education Directors of important documents, dates and deadlines for the fiscal year.

Colorado Special Education Advisory Committee (CSEAC)

Link to: [Colorado Special Education Advisory Committee information](#)

CSEAC is a state level committee mandated by federal and state law. Members are interested in the quality of education received by children/youth with disabilities. The committee includes parents of and individuals with disabilities, educational service providers, administrators and representatives from a variety of related agencies. Participation is statewide and representative of diverse disabilities.



Special Education Directors Standard Two: Special Education and School Systems

The Special Education Director shall: (a) demonstrate knowledge of organizational culture; (b) apply a systems approach to the development of special education programs and processes; and (c) facilitate effective systems change. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

- 2.1 Develop organizational relationships between and among:
- federal, state, intermediate and local educational agencies;
 - district and building levels and the various schools and schooling levels; • special and general education;
 - the greater community, including but not limited to families, advocates and agencies, and potential employers.

2.2 Demonstrate an understanding of leadership roles, hierarchies, authority, and chain-of-command relationships.

2.3 Promote positive culture within special education and in the greater organization, in alignment with district vision, mission and values.

2.4 Support systems thinking at all levels of the organization.

2.5 Lead change processes consistent with proven change theories at all levels of the organization, inclusive of all stakeholder groups.



Special Education Committees Supporting Students with Disabilities

➤ ***Special Education Fiscal Advisory Committee (SEFAC)***

Link to: [Special Education Fiscal Advisory Committee](#)

SEFAC was appointed by the State Board of Education through House Bill 06-1375 to specifically address High Cost applications for Tier C eligible students. High Cost applications are monitored and approved through the SEFAC.

➤ ***Special Education Legislative Consortium***

The Consortium was developed through a statewide agreement with AU special education directors. The purpose of the Consortium is to provide the ability to lobby and have representation at the legislature on behalf of students with disabilities. The consortium will not lobby against or for any bill for which there is not full statewide consensus. AU's contribution to this legislative group cannot be paid from federal funds. Fees are determined using Dec 1 Student Count from the previous year and are billed annually. Each region has one rep that attends monthly meetings and reports back to the region.

➤ ***State Directors Leadership Team (SDLT)***

State Directors Leadership (SDLT) is a group comprised of Special Education Directors from each region who meet monthly with CDE staff. The purpose is to have ongoing, consistent communication from the field to CDE and from CDE to the field. It allows the State Director of Special Education to have direct communication with representatives of each region. It is used to vet guidance from the CDE prior to information being released to the field. Typically, SDLT informs the planning of State directors meetings.



Special Education Directors Standard Three: Law and Policy

The Special Education Director shall be knowledgeable about and able to apply relevant federal and state statutes, regulations, case law and policies that impact all children, including those with disabilities. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

3.1 Implement requirements of federal, state and case law in public education, with an emphasis on special education.

3.2 Demonstrate knowledge of policies and procedures required to implement legal requirements.

3.3 Describe legislative processes at local, state and national levels.

3.4 Demonstrate skills in networking and advocating on behalf of students with disabilities in order to develop, influence and impact laws and policies.

3.5 Facilitate the development of student-centered Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) to include procedures, processes and legal requirements.

3.6 Identify resources of national organizations in the field of special education.

3.7 Execute federal, state and local data collection, analysis and reporting requirements.



The Special Education Director shall be knowledgeable about and able to apply relevant federal and state statutes, regulations, case law and policies that impact all children, including those with disabilities. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

3.8 Provide for an educational environment that is safe, secure, healthy and accessible.

3.9 Implement principles of universal design to assure equal access to students across all educational settings that include specialized transportation, health needs, safety procedures and proactive approaches for students with disabilities in emergency situations.

The Identity Management Site

Link to: [Identity Management Site](#)

Logins to the site are required and issued by the Administrative Unit (AU) Local Area Manager (LAM)

This site is used to access the following systems:

➤ **Exceptional Student Services Unit/ESSU Data Management System (DMS)**

Required data submission and information is collected and stored in the DMS. AU's are required to submit this information to the CDE. Examples include:

- Profile page: CDE communications and file uploads
- Dispute Resolution: Disputes brought to the CDE by parents
- Fiscal: Fiscal self-audit can be accessed
- Compliance: IEP and Indicator 13 Reviews
- Family-School: Family surveys (CDE survey questions can be obtained from Joyce Thiessen-Barrett barrett_j@cde.state.co.us)
- Performance: Post School Outcome surveys and AU/district growth and performance data



- Improvement: AU/district data for the state systemic improvement plan results
 - Summary: State and district data results for compliance and performance indicators

 - **Data Pipeline for submission of required Special Education Reports and RANDA**
 - RANDA- the Colorado State Model Performance Management System used by many districts and AU to evaluate licensed staff for SB 191
 - December Count/ Student and Staff
 - Special Education End of Year
 - Special Education Discipline Report
 - Federal IDEA Application/Budget System
 - IDEA budget for Part B and Preschool Flow through dollars (in coordination with District/AU Finance)
 - IDEA End of Year expenditures for Part B and Preschool Flow through dollars (in coordination with District/AU Finance)
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Narrative and Performance Reports/General Education Provisions Act GEPA

Link to: [Narrative and Performance Reports and General Education Provisions](#)

- Part B
- Preschool
- Allowable Costs
- Narrative Cycles - narratives are done every three years unless you choose to amend it
- Performance Reports and evaluation are completed annually

Federal Application/Budget and Narrative must align. Dollars cannot be allocated unless there is alignment to objectives and activities in the approved narrative.

Individual Education Program

The CDE website contains model IEP forms and guidance to complete the IEP process. IEP Guidance document assists staff in correctly creating the IEP.

Enrich

The Enrich Computerized IEP system is an option available to all AU's in the State of Colorado. Enrich has embedded within it, compliance validation to decrease errors as users manage IEP's and provides a system to monitor progress for students with disabilities. Contact the ESSU unit for more information about the system and its use in your AU.

Director's Corner

Link to: [Exceptional Student Services Unit's Special Education Directors' Corner](#)

- Outside Links (i.e. ECEA., IDEA Etc.)
 - Comprehensive Plan Documents
 - Information about Director's meetings
 - Resources
-



- AU Continuous Improvement Plan
- Professional Development Opportunities
- Results Driven Accountability (RDA) FAQ's
- ESSU Responsibility List and Staff Contact Information

Dispute Resolution

Colorado has three opportunities for families in the area of Dispute Resolution. These include Due Process complaints, State complaints and Mediation.

Colorado currently has an Early Dispute Resolution Board. The primary mission is to develop additional early dispute resolution options, other than mediation, throughout the state of Colorado. Beginning the 2015-2016 school year, the state decided to purchase facilitated IEP curriculum and train and certify statewide facilitators. The Board will look at other methods of dispute resolution in the future.

Legal Resources

Individuals with Disabilities Act - IDEA

Link to: [Individuals with Disabilities Act](#)

Exceptional Children's Education Act – ECEA

Link to: [Colorado's Exceptional Children Education Act](#)

Office of Special Education Programs - OSEP

Link to: [Office of Special Education Programs](#)



Colorado Revised Statutes - C.R.S.

Link to: [Colorado Revised Statutes](#)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act - 504

Link to: [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act](#)

Americans with Disabilities Act – ADA

Link to: [Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

Office of Civil Rights – OCR

Link to: [Office of Civil Rights](#)

Every Student Succeeds Act – ESSA

Link to: [Every Student Succeeds Act](#)

Restraint and Seclusion Regulations

Link to: [Restraint and Seclusion Regulations](#)

Colorado Restraint Guidelines

Link to: [Colorado's Restraint Guidelines](#) *see annual reporting requirement in 2.05 (2)

Colorado Department of Human Services

Link to: [Colorado Department of Human Services](#)

Department of Youth Corrections



Link to: [Department of Youth Corrections](#)



Special Education Directors Standard Four: Instructional Leadership

The Special Education Director shall be able to integrate general education and special education, including curriculum, instructional strategies, and individualized instruction in support of all children, including those with disabilities. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

4.1 Facilitate the attainment of state standards, expanded benchmarks and access skills.

4.2 Promote high standards for the instruction of all students, including students with disabilities, and for continuously improving their academic achievement.

4.3 Implement assessment systems for identification and programming.

4.4 Develop data driven, evidence-based instructional practices, including behavioral support systems.

4.5 Develop comprehensive approaches to educational planning, including student involvement and self-determination.

4.6 Implement transition plans for individuals with disabilities across the educational continuum and other programs from birth through adulthood.

4.7 Provide leadership to guide appropriate instructional decision-making, focusing on individualization for students with disabilities.



The Special Education Director shall be able to integrate general education and special education, including curriculum, instructional strategies, and individualized instruction in support of all children, including those with disabilities. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

4.8 Facilitate staff development related to evidence-based practices, rigorous content and effective outcomes for all learners, including those with disabilities.

State Wide Assistive Technology Augmentative and Alternative Communication (SWAAAC)

Link to: [State Wide Assistive Technology Augmentative and Alternative Communication](#)

The Colorado Department of Education’s school-based SWAAAC teams provide multidisciplinary Assistive Technology services which enable students with disabilities equal access to the curriculum and full participation in their education and classroom. There are over 60 participating school districts and 500 SWAAAC team members across the state of Colorado.

Colorado Academic Standards

Link to: [Colorado Academic Standards](#)

Colorado implemented new academic standards to ensure all Colorado students are prepared for college and career success. The Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) set clear, consistent guidelines for what students should know and be able to accomplish at each grade level. The standards also assist educational and workforce leaders to help students prepare for life after high school. Standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities in all grades must be clear and rigorous so that our public educational system gives all students the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to succeed in postsecondary environments and the workforce, to be well-informed and responsible citizens, and to lead fulfilling personal lives. In Colorado, these outcomes are located in the Extended Evidence Outcomes (EEO) section below each grade level standard.



Link to: [Colorado's Extended Evidence Based Outcomes](#)



State Assessments

Link to: [Colorado's Assessments](#)

Colorado adopted new assessments that align with the Colorado Academic Standards. Colorado Measure of Academic Success (CMAS)/Partnership for Assessment for College and Careers (PARCC) accurately measure students' mastery of these skills. Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) are the state's common measurement of students' progress at the end of the school year in English language arts, math, science and social studies. These are designed to be administered online. The tests feature a variety of interactive questions that are more engaging and aligned with 21st century teaching and learning practices.

For Alternative assessment, the IEP team makes the determination that the child must take an alternate assessment instead of taking CMAS/PARCC. A statement explaining the reason the child cannot participate in the regular assessment and the particular assessments selected must be documented in the IEP.

Guidance document for Eligibility

Link to: [Colorado's Guidance Document for Eligibility](#)

CO-Alt Science and Social Studies

Link to: [Colorado's Alternative Science and Social Studies Assessment](#)

CO-Alt Science and Social Studies is the State Alternate for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities determined by the IEP team.

Link to: [Colorado's Academic Achievement Standards & Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines Worksheet](#)

Dynamic Learning Maps DLM English Language Arts (ELA) and Math

Link to: [Dynamic Learning Maps Essential Elements](#)



The Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) Essential Elements (EE's) are specific statements of knowledge and skills linked to the grade-level expectations identified in college- and career-readiness standards. EE's build a bridge from content standards to academic expectations for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

READ Act and Students with Disabilities

Link to: [Colorado READ Act and Students with Disabilities](#)

Differentiated Pathways - SWD and READ

New "Differentiated Pathways" have been developed by the Exceptional Student Services Unit, in collaborating with the Office of Literacy, to include all students in the READ Act. The Attorney General has stated that this legislation is for ALL Colorado students in grades K-3 and students with disabilities cannot be excluded as a result of their disability status.

Link to: [Differentiated Pathways and Students with Disabilities](#)



Special Education Director Standard Five: Program Planning and Organization

The Special Education Director shall be able to evaluate the efficacy and efficiency of special education programs, facilities, services and monitoring systems and to use the evaluation data to improve the programs and services for all children, including those with disabilities. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

5.1 Apply program evaluation strategies for determining efficacy and efficiency.

5.2 Implement continuous improvement monitoring processes.

5.3 Develop special education programs, facilities, services, and monitoring systems that are complementary to and mutually supportive of one another and of general education.

5.4 Facilitate strategic planning for program development and implementation to encompass all stakeholders.

5.5 Demonstrate and extend collaborative consultation principles with all stakeholders.

5.6 Facilitate professional development to implement, improve and expand programs.



Comprehensive Plan

Each AU must have a comprehensive plan which provides assurance statements that each AU meets requirements and is in compliance with IDEA and ECEA. CDE has a template on the Director's Corner. When changes are made to the Local Comprehensive Plan, directors are required to submit changes through the ESSU DMS.

Link to: [Exceptional Student Services Unit's Special Education Directors' Corner on Comprehensive Plan](#)

Private Schools - Proportionate Share

Each AU that has private schools within its boundaries must set aside a proportionate share of its federal funds to support/serve parentally-placed students with disabilities who attend those private schools. Share calculation may be found at the link below (Federal regulation 300.129 through 300.144)

Link to: [Guidance on Parentally Placed Private School](#)

Charter Schools

Charter schools in the State of Colorado are chartered by either the Colorado Charter School Institute or the individual districts. Charters are required to follow the guidelines of the IDEA and ECEA. Federal and State funding for special education services in Charter Schools is the responsibility of the AU in which the Charter school is located. Cost formulas are district specific. The AU Comprehensive plan must address the manner in which funds and special education services are provided to the Charter School.

Program Evaluation

This process must be documented in your local comprehensive plan.



Program evaluation is required as articulated in the ECEA. Each administrative unit or approved facility school shall maintain records of results of all qualitative and quantitative evaluations of special education services rendered. Program evaluations of special education services shall occur annually. Within a period of five years, services to children with disabilities must be systematically evaluated. Such program evaluations shall review the extent to which quality special education policies and practices are in place and where improvements can occur; and the degree to which children with disabilities are achieving their individual goals as well as school, district, and state standards and student outcomes.

Requirements for Program Evaluation

The AU assures that:

- Records are maintained of the results of all qualitative and quantitative evaluations of special education services rendered.
- Evaluations of special education services occur annually and within a period of five years systematically cover aspects of services to children with disabilities.

The AU assures that the program evaluation reviews:

- The extent to which quality special education policies, procedures and practices are in place and where improvements can occur; and
- The degree to which children with disabilities are achieving their individual goals as well as school, district, and state standards and student outcomes.

Citations:

- ECEA Rule 3.06
- ECEA Rule 8.01 (1)(a)(iii)
- ECEA Rule 8.01 (1)(h)

Staff Development

Staff development is required as articulated in the ECEA. Administrative units and approved facility schools shall provide for staff development to assure opportunities for appropriate educational services to children with disabilities. Opportunities for staff development shall be provided to foster the continuing development of the awareness, skills and knowledge of each staff member providing direct or indirect services to children with disabilities. Activities shall be designed to bring about changes in



knowledge, attitudes, actual performance skills and interpersonal relations of staff members. Staff development shall include an evaluation component to determine its effectiveness.

Professional development opportunities are also available on the CDE website:

Link to: [Professional Development Opportunities](#)

Special Education Accountability

Link to: [Special Education Accountability](#)

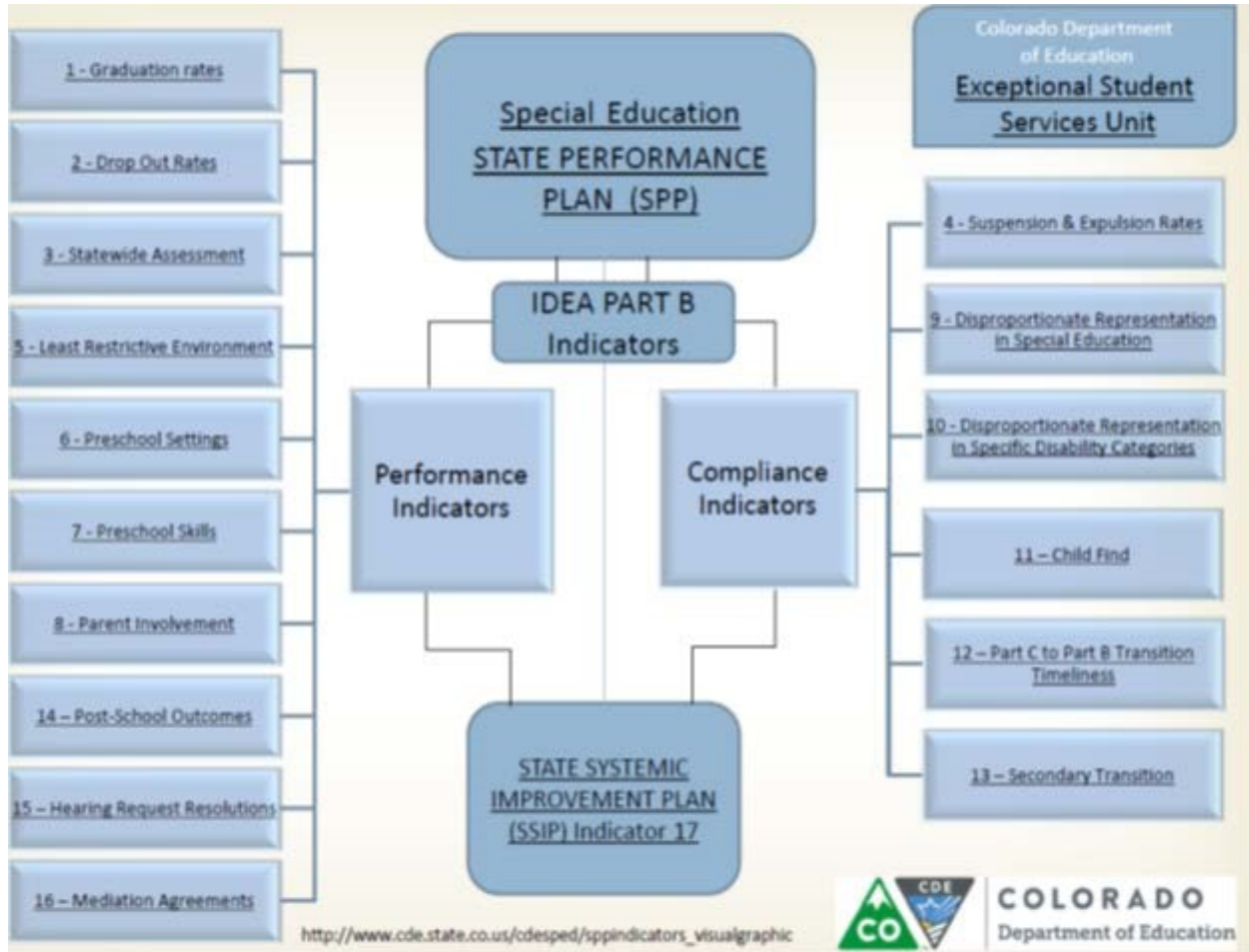
The State Performance Plan is the State's plan to the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) that evaluates the State's efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of Part B of the IDEA and how the State will improve the implementation of IDEA Part B. The SPP contains measurable and rigorous targets in 20 indicators that were established by the US Department of Education. These indicators fall into three monitoring priority areas identified by OSEP:

- Provision of a Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE)
- State exercise of general supervision, including child find, effective monitoring, the use of resolution meetings, mediation, and a system of transition services
- Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups receiving special education and related services, to the extent the representation is the result of inappropriate identification.
- Local AU student achievement and staff data can be found at CDE's School View

Link to: [CDE's School View](#)

State Performance Plan

Link to: [Colorado's Special Education SPP-APR](#)





Continuous Improvement Process (CIP)

Link to: [CDE Special Education School District Monitoring](#)

The Continuous Improvement Process is a critical component of the Colorado Department of Education's general supervision requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004.

The new requirements of P. L. 105-17, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act have posed many challenges and opportunities for the Colorado Department of Education staff and school districts throughout Colorado. Major efforts have enabled general and special education staff to move forward in improving results for students with disabilities, including (a) the establishment of the Colorado Steering Committee for the Continuous Improvement of Early Childhood and Special Education Programs; and (b) a clear articulation of goals and objectives to enhance Colorado schools and communities, especially in the context of Colorado special education.

AU Determinations [CDE Special Education Administrative Unit Determination](#)

IDEA 2004 requires the State to report to the public on each AU's performance compared to state targets and state performance for 14 indicators from the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR). Indicators reported to the public are a mixture of performance and compliance indicators. Results Driven accountability (as of October 2015) incorporates student performance along with the compliance indicators.

Enforcement Actions and Improvement Planning

Under the priority area of General Supervision, the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Part B State Performance Plan Indicator 15 states: General supervision system (including monitoring, complaints, hearings, etc.) identifies and corrects noncompliance as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from identification. As part of this requirement, the Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) Exceptional Student Services Unit (ESSU) must identify the



actions, including technical assistance and/or enforcement actions, which will be taken to assure compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In response to this requirement, the ESSU has identified the following enforcement actions which may be imposed on Administrative Units (AU) or State Operated Programs (SOP) for failure to make adequate progress toward correction of noncompliance. Noncompliance may be cited at any time [Exceptional Children’s Educational Act (ECEA) 7.00]. Enforcement Actions will be determined by the ESSU. Appeals are provided for as described in ECEA Rule 7.00. Areas of noncompliance identified through General Supervision activities must be corrected as soon as possible but not more than one year from the ESSU’s issuance of a finding of noncompliance. Noncompliance cited through dispute resolution processes must be remedied within the timeline ordered by the decision. Depending on the circumstances of each case, one or more of the following enforcement actions will be initiated by the CDE:

Letter of Concern

When noncompliance is not corrected within the required timeline, a letter will be sent to the AU or SOP Superintendent or Executive Director and the Director of Special Education. Copies will be sent to the Deputy Commissioner of the Accountability, Performance & Support Division, the Director Exceptional Student Services Unit and the ESSU Partner for the region in which the AU is situated.

Meeting with Administration

A meeting will be convened by the CDE. Representatives from CDE will meet with the AU or SOP Superintendent or Executive Director and the Director of Special Education to discuss corrective actions and technical assistance to address outstanding noncompliance.

Compliance Agreement



The ESSU may require the AU or SOP to enter into a compliance agreement with the ESSU.

Direct the Use of Funds

The CDE may direct the use of special education funds received by the AU or SOP to the area or areas in which the AU or SOP remains out of compliance. This may include directing the AU or SOP to:

- obtain targeted technical assistance in the area or areas of concern;
- fund a team led and approved by the ESSU to oversee the continued data collection, analysis and implementation of the improvement plan.

Withhold Funding

The CDE may delay or withhold funding as described in ECEA Rule 7.00.

Gifted and Talented(GT)

Link to: [CDE Gifted and Talented Education](#)

"Gifted and talented children" means those persons between the ages of five and twenty-one whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Children under five who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services.

Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice-exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socioeconomic and ethnic, cultural populations. Gifted students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these areas of giftedness:

- General or specific intellectual ability.
-



- Specific academic aptitude.
- Creative or productive thinking.
- Leadership abilities.
- Visual arts, performing arts, musical or psychomotor abilities. Gifted and Talented

In the State of Colorado funding for GT is appropriated from the ECEA dollars. Dollars are calculated separately from the special education dollars.



Special Education Director Standard Six: Human Resource Functions

<p>The Special Education Director shall have the knowledge and ability to recruit, retain and evaluate qualified personnel in order to effectively implement programs and services for all children, including those with disabilities. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:</p>	
6.1	Recruit and retain qualified personnel.
6.2	Screen, interview and select qualified staff.
6.3	Facilitate professional development of staff members.
6.4	Implement alternative procedures to ensure appropriate personnel when fully qualified individuals are not available.
6.5	Delineate roles and responsibilities of all special education instructional and related services personnel.
6.6	Adhere to established ethical and legal considerations of human resource management.
6.7	Provide supervision and evaluation of personnel serving students with disabilities.



Human Resources

All personnel providing special education services to children with disabilities shall be qualified. Personnel requirements are listed in the ECEA under 3.04 Personnel qualifications. This includes staff hired under the Special Education Temporary Authorization provisions.

Hiring/Termination

Directors must assure that sufficient personnel shall be available to provide for identification, referral, evaluation, determination of disability and eligibility for special education services; development and review of IEPs, and to provide appropriate special education instructional and related services to implement all IEPs for children with disabilities. Each administrative unit shall have a method or standards by which it determines the number and types of special education personnel required to meet the needs of children with disabilities. Such methods or standards shall be a part of the local comprehensive plan. Each administrative unit shall assure that licensed/certificated personnel qualified in a child's identified area(s) of need will have diagnostic and ongoing instructional responsibilities and contact with the child and the child's other service providers and parents as specified in 3.03 of the ECEA. Each special education teacher will serve, at a minimum, a majority of special education students with the same identified area of need as that teacher's special education license or certification endorsement. The endorsement level must be appropriate for the age being taught.

Processes may differ from AU to AU. AU or District Board policy determines termination and hiring processes. This does not relieve the special education directors from their responsibility to ensure FAPE for all students with disabilities in their AU.

Evaluation processes are also district specific. Most districts and AU's have adopted the Colorado Model for Evaluation through **Senate Bill 191**. Special Education teachers and Specialized Service Professionals are required to be evaluated on a yearly basis.

Link to: [CDE Educator Effectiveness State Model Evaluation System](#)



All special education staff or administrators must complete a CDE approved Induction program to move from the **Initial License** to the **Professional License**.

Temporary Educator Eligibility Authorization

Link to: [Temporary Educator Eligibility Authorization](#)

This authorization is issued upon request from an administrative unit, facility school, or state operated program that is unable to employ an applicant who is appropriately endorsed in the area of assignment.

Alternative Licensure Program

Applicants who want to be a teacher and have a Bachelor’s degree or higher, may be ready to become an alternative teacher candidate. Alternative teacher candidates include:

- Recent undergraduates who have never enrolled in or who did not complete a teacher preparation program;
- Early career changes who have graduated from college, worked for a few years, and realize that they always wanted to become teachers;
- Mid-career changes who are looking for a pathway to make a difference in the lives of kids by becoming teachers;
- Community members who have college degrees and life experiences, and want to impact the lives of their community’s children;
- Paraprofessionals who have completed their Bachelor’s degrees and are seeking a pathway to licensure;
- Retired military members who would like to “serve again” by becoming teachers;

For more information and designated agencies see the link: [Designated Agencies for Alternative Educator Licensure](#)

School Nurses are required to be certified through the Department of Education

Link to: [School Nursing and Health - Professional School Nursing](#)



Special Education Director Standard Seven: Parent, Family and Community Engagement

The Special Education Director shall be knowledgeable about and able to facilitate partnerships and engage parents, families and communities in the implementation of special education programs and delivery of special education services. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

7.1 Implement a comprehensive communication infrastructure to organize and distribute the flow of information coming from and to the district.

7.2 Facilitate collaborative relationships with all stakeholders.

7.3 Promote parent training and support services to support parents in understanding rights, responsibilities, processes and decision-making within special education.

7.4 Develop interactive opportunities with the local and/or state Special Education Advisory Council, parent advocacy groups, the Parent Training and Information Centers, and the Protection and Advocacy Agency.

7.5 Disseminate current research and best practices to improve student achievement.

7.6 Demonstrate conflict resolution in a variety of contexts.

7.7 Develop and implement intra-agency and interagency agreements.



Child Find (Birth -21)

All children with disabilities residing in the State, including children with disabilities, who are homeless children or are wards of the State; students who have dropped out of public education (identified or not identified for services); children with disabilities attending private schools; regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated. Child find requires that states find, identify, locate, evaluate, and serve all children with disabilities from birth to 21 years of age. If a student drops out of school prior to the semester that they turn 21, it is the AU's responsibility under child find to notify students of their continued right to services or evaluation.

Family Information and Resources

Link to: [CDE Parent and Family Resources](#)

A variety of information is available in support of families and parents of students with disabilities

PEAK Parent Center

Link to: [PEAK Parent Center](#)

In 1986, PEAK Parent Center was awarded the grant to serve as the Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) for the State of Colorado. PEAK has maintained a steadfast commitment to ensuring that people with all types of disabilities can be fully included in their neighborhood schools, their communities, and in all walks of life. PEAK supports and empowers families to be actively involved in navigating the special education process. Further they believe that every child matters and every child should have access to an education that leads to self-sufficiency, independence, employment, and meaningful community involvement.



The ARC of Colorado

Link to: [The ARC of Colorado](#)

The ARC of Colorado provides advocacy and services to people and families of children who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. The ARC connects advocates, activities, families, experts and professionals who work together to ensure that people with intellectual/developmental disabilities have the resources to meet their needs and live self-determined lives.



Special Education Director Standard Eight: Budget and Resources

The Special Education Director shall be knowledgeable and able to demonstrate school district budgeting and resource allocation, including those related to special education. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

8.1 Identify fiscal issues relevant to the provision of services to learners with disabilities.

8.2 Manage human resources to align appropriate expertise with the individualized needs of learners with disabilities.

8.3 Apply knowledge of local, state and federal reporting requirements to promote responsible fiscal management.

8.4 Develop proposals to external agencies to secure supplemental resources to enhance the services available to students with special needs.

8.5 Implement agreements for contractual services from outside agencies to benefit students with disabilities.

8.6 Establish linkages between preschool, school age and post-secondary programs and services.

8.7 Develop program budgets that allocate adequate resources to school sites and programs, and demonstrate sound fiscal management and planning.



8.8 Allocate available Full Time Equivalency (FTE) positions to special education programs and services to ensure a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) to students identified with disabilities.

Funding Sources for Special Education

Federal, State and local sources are used to support students with disabilities in the State of Colorado

- IDEA Federal Part B (3-21)
- IDEA Federal Part C (0-3)
- ECEA Special Education
 - Tier A \$1250 all students with Disabilities 3-21,
 - Tier B Additional funding for students with the following disabilities Intellectual Disability, Serious Emotional Disability, Hearing Impairment Including Deafness, Visual Impairment Including Blindness, Deaf-blindness, Multiple Disabilities, Traumatic Brain Injury and Autism Spectrum Disorder,
 - Tier C In District and Out of District High cost funding. AU's have the opportunity to apply annually for Tier C funds when a high cost is incurred in order to meet the needs of the student. Thresholds are \$25,000 for In-district students and \$40,000 for Out of District students [CDE Special Education Finance](#)
- Per Pupil Revenue (PPR)
- General Education (Local) revenue

Maintenance of Effort (MOE) [Special Education Maintenance of Effort](#)

Maintenance of Effort is, with certain exceptions, funds provided to an LEA under Part B which must not be used to reduce the level of expenditures, for the education of children with disabilities, made by the



LEA from local funds, or the combination of State and local funds, below the level of those expenditures for the preceding fiscal year. 34 CFR §300.203

Early Childhood Special Education Programming

Preschool special education is a state and federal mandated program for three- and four-year-old children who meet state eligibility criteria for special education and are experiencing challenges in their learning and development. A child is eligible if they have a significant delay in one or more areas of development, such as learning, speaking or playing.

Eligible children are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. This means that the required preschool services are to be provided in an inclusive setting at no cost to parents.

Every school district, some through a local Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), provides special education services to young children. Currently over 8000 children receive individualized special education services in preschool. (December 2014 data)

Services are provided through school-based programs, community early childhood settings and/or Head Start programs.

Referrals of children with a suspected delay in development can be made to the local Child Find team where the family and child live.

Part C of the IDEA Birth through age 2

Services for children Birth through age 2 are governed through the Colorado Early Intervention Program and the Colorado Department of Human Services/Early Childhood Development. Services to infants, toddlers and families occur within their communities and typically in the child's home environment. AU's are responsible for Child Find identification and evaluation. Community Center Boards are responsible for Services.

Link to: [Colorado Office for Early Childhood - Early Intervention](#)

Results Matter Indicator 7

Link to: [OSEP Reporting for Preschool Special Education - Indicator 7 - Preschool Outcomes](#)



Results Matter is a statewide program that promotes the use of ongoing, developmental, observation based assessment in early care and education settings and serves as Colorado’s outcomes measurement system for early childhood.

Providers who participate in the Results Matter program use assessment systems such as Teaching Strategies™ GOLD® online [Teaching Strategies website](#) to assess learning and development in Social-Emotional, Language and Literacy, Math, Science, Creative Arts, Physical Development and Approaches to Learning. Through the authentic assessment strategies of ongoing observation, portfolio documentation and completion of developmental checklists, they identify and plan for the instructional needs of young children in their care throughout the year.

The Special Education Director is responsible to ensure that the data for the OSEP Exit Report for Indicator 7 is completed through the system. The Preschool Director from each school district is required to submit data to complete the OSEP Reports within the Teaching Strategies GOLD system.



Definitions and Resources

Administrative Unit (AU) means a school district, board of cooperative services, multi-district administrative unit, or the State Charter School Institute, that is providing educational services to exceptional children and that is responsible for the local administration.

- An **Administrative unit of residence** shall mean the unit in which the child resides on a day-to-day basis, ECEA has exceptions listed.
- An **Administrative unit of attendance** shall mean the unit that delivers the special education program for a child.

Board of Cooperatives Services (BOCS/BOCES)- means a regional educational services unit created by Colorado State statute and is designed to provide supporting, instructional, administrative, facility, community, or any other services contracted by participating members.

Facility Schools

Link to: [Facility Schools website](#)

The goal of **Office of Facility Schools** is to assure that all students in placement receive a quality education and to improve educational outcomes for those students. A number of initiatives are underway statewide in an effort to accomplish that goal.

- The term **Eligible Facility** means a day treatment center, residential childcare facility or a hospital licensed by either the Colorado Department of Human Services or the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.
- The term **Approved Facility School** refers to an educational program that is operated by a licensed agency and that has been approved to receive reimbursement for education services for students placed in the program.

Facility Schools Tuition Cost rates are updated/approved on a yearly basis. The cost rate document instructs directors on the approved rates that Facility schools may charge an AU for students in out of



district placement. The approved rates apply to tuition costs only, and do not include Extended school year or agreed upon related services for the student (i.e. speech, paraprofessional support, OT/PT, transportation, etc.).

Students are placed at Facility schools by the AU, Department of Human Services (DHS) or the Court system. If DHS/Court makes the placement the AU is responsible for payment of education costs only, DHS/Court is responsible for therapeutic costs. Notification from the DHS/Court system must be provided to the AU of Residence and the AU in which the Facility is located within 15 calendar days of placement in the facility. An AU can agree to higher tuition costs than established and approved by the Department of Education. The district of Residence is not responsible for paying tuition costs for **ESY** services for a child unless the child's IEP specifies the need for ESY.

AU's are required to maintain copies of Contracts, Billing/Attendance and IEP's for all students placed in a Facility School.

9.03(2)(a) Placement in Approved Facility Schools

9.03(2)(a)(i) When a child with a disability is placed, by a public agency, into an approved facility school, the district of residence is responsible for paying the educational costs over and above applicable revenues, also known as tuition costs. The administrative unit of residence shall count the child for the December 1 Special Education Count. The tuition costs shall be determined by the Department of Education for each approved facility school in accordance with Section 9.06(1) of these Rules. Such tuition costs shall be the maximum amount the district of residence shall be obligated to pay for the special education program. The district of residence may pay a higher tuition cost than the cost established and approved by the Department of Education for children in need of specialized services, if these services were included in a child's IEP but were not included in the approved tuition cost. The district of residence is not responsible for paying tuition costs for extended school year services for a child unless the child's IEP specifies the need for extended school year services. The Department of Education does not set the amount of tuition costs the administrative unit of attendance may charge the district of residence for children in group homes served by the administrative unit of attendance.



9.03(2)(a)(ii) Any court of record, the Department of Human Services, or any other public agency authorized by law to place a child with a disability in a facility with an approved facility school shall notify in writing the child’s administrative unit of residence, the administrative unit in which the approved facility school is located and the Department of the placement within fifteen calendar days after the placement. If a court or public agency makes a public placement but fails to provide the required written notice, such court or public agency shall be responsible for the tuition costs for the child until such time as the required notification is made. If the child’s administrative unit of residence does not provide written notice of disapproval of the child’s placement in an approved facility school by a court or public agency within fifteen calendar days after the required notification, the placement shall be deemed appropriate. A decision to disapprove a placement must be based solely on the unavailability of appropriate educational services. If the placement is disapproved, the administrative unit of residence must assure that the child receives a free appropriate public education until an appropriate placement can be determined in accordance with Sections 5.04(1) and (2) of these Rules.

9.03(2)(a)(ii)(A) If an administrative unit of residence initiates a placement of a child with a disability into an approved facility school for its day treatment or residential program, and the approved facility school also provides the child’s educational program, the administrative unit of residence shall count the child on its December 1 Special Education Count. The approved facility school shall count the student on the October 1 Count, bill the Department for one and seventy-three hundredths (i.e., 173%) of the statewide base per pupil revenue, pursuant to Section 22-54-129(c)(II), C.R.S., and the administrative unit of residence shall pay the approved facility school all remaining day treatment or residential costs, as well as any additional educational costs agreed to by the parties.

9.03(2)(a)(ii)(B) If an administrative unit of residence places a child with a disability into an approved facility school for the educational program only, the district of residence must count the child on the October 1 Count as being in a private school placement, and the administrative unit of residence shall count the child on its December 1 Special Education Count as being in a private school placement. The approved facility school shall not bill the Department for one and seventy-three hundredths (i.e., 173%) of the statewide base PPR for the child, pursuant to Section 22-54-129(c)(II), C.R.S. Instead the approved facility school shall bill the administrative unit of residence for the total cost of the child’s educational program, as agreed to by the approved facility school and the administrative unit of residence.





Educational Surrogate Parents

Link to: [Exceptional Students Services Unit's Educational Surrogate Parents Rules](#)

An **Educational Surrogate Parent (ESP)** is a person assigned to represent a child with a disability in educational decision-making regarding the identification, evaluation, educational placement and the provision of a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) for the child. The administrative unit of attendance and each state-operated program must ensure that the rights of a child are protected when—No parent (as defined in Section 2.33 of these Rules) can be identified; the administrative unit of attendance or the state-operated program, after reasonable efforts, cannot locate a parent; The child is a ward of the State; or the child is a homeless child as defined in Section 22-1-102.5, C.R.S.

ESP's are assigned and approved by the AU Director. Forms can be found at

Link to: [Exceptional Students Services Unit's Educational Surrogate Parent - Assignment Information](#)

Technical Assistance (TA) for the Office of Special Education (formally known as Fast Facts)

Link to: [Exceptional Student Services Unit's Technical Assistance](#)

FAQ documents for specific areas from the CDE can be found on the ESSU website.

Link to: [Exceptional Student Services Unit website](#)

Acronyms used by the CDE

Link to: [CDE Frequently Used Acronyms](#)

Data Reporting Resources

Link to: [CDE Data Reporting Resources](#)
